

Message Text

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ACTION TRSE-00

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COME-00 EB-08 EA-10 FRB-03 INR-10 NEA-10 NSAE-00
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USEEC

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E.O. 11652: N/A
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SUBJECT: IBRD/IMF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

REF: STATE 214953

1. SUMMARY - AT LEAST FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE NORWEGIAN
MFA, THINKING ON TERMINATION OF DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(DC) IS SERIOUS. NORDIC MEETING IN HELSINKI EARLY
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THE MORNING OF AUGUST 24, HOWEVER, REACHED THE CONCLUSION
THAT NORDICS WOULD NOT BE MAKING PROPOSAL TO ABOLISH
DC. NEITHER WOULD THEY STRONGLY SUPPORT ITS CONTINUANCE.
END SUMMARY.

2. UPON RECEIPT OF REFTL (OOB AUGM 24) EMBOFF CALLED
ON MFA SPECIAL ADVISOR FOR DEVELOPMENT AFFAIRS JON AASE

TO GET A MORE PRECISE VIEW OF NORDIC THINKING ON DC AND TO PRESENT US VIEWS. NORDIC MEETING IN HELSINKI WAS ALREADY UNDERWAY, AND AASE SAID HE WOULD PASS ON US VIEWS TO GON REP ASAP. WE NOW LEARN THAT INDEPENDENT OF HAVING THOSE VIEWS, THE NORDICS HAVE DECIDED THAT THEY WOULD NOT QUOTE EXPOSE THEMSELVES UNQUOTE BY MAKING A PROPOSAL TO ABOLISH THE DC. VERY MUCH IN LINE WITH US THINKING, THE NORDICS WILL INSTEAD EMPHASIZE REFORM, I.E. A SHARPER LIMITATION OF TOPICS, A POSITIVE DECISION FOR A REVIEW OF THE DC'S USEFULNESS WITHIN TWO YEARS' TIME, AND PERHAPS CONSIDERATION OF WORK ON THE TOPIC OF MASSIVE TRANSFER OF RESOURCES. THE NORDICS LOOK FORWARD TO DISCUSSING OUTLINES OF REFORM AT SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING IN WASHINGTON SEPTEMBER 6-7.

3. AASE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT THE NORDICS CONTINUE TO BE SKEPTICAL OF THE USEFULNESS OF THE DC, AND HE DOES NOT UNDERSTAND USG SURPRISE OVER THIS. HE CLAIMS THAT THE NORDICS HAVE FROM THE BEGINNING BEEN UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE DC, AND THAT THEY HAVE BEEN QUITE OPEN ABOUT THIS. IN THE GON'S VIEW, THE DC HAS NOT BECOME A FORUM IN WHICH TO DEVELOP CONCRETE ACTION PROPOSALS FOR MINISTERIAL CONSIDERATION, EVEN AFTER THE REFORMS OF THE PAST YEAR, AND THAT THIS YEAR'S AGENDA BEARS THIS OUT. THIS SAID, HOWEVER, IF THE GON WERE CONVINCED THAT THE LDCS STILL STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF THE DC LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(AND THE GON DOES NOT SEEM CONVINCED), THEN THE NORDICS WOULD NOT, FOR POLITICAL REASONS, CONSIDER PROPOSING ABOLISHMENT.

4. COMMENT: THE NORDICS SEEM TO HAVE CONSIDERABLY MODIFIED THEIR THINKING ON THIS ISSUE IN THE LAST TEN DAYS. THE MEETING IN OSLO ON AUGUST 14 DID EXPLICITLY RAISE THE QUESTION OF AN INITIATIVE TO ABOLISH THE DC, BUT NOW THE NORDICS ARE MODERATING THIS COURSE. AASE DESCRIBES IT AS A QUOTE DELAY UNQUOTE OF THE REQUEST FOR SERIOUS REVIEW, BUT PERHAPS THE NORDICS ARE INSTEAD CONSIDERING THEIR IMAGE AND CREDIBILITY VIS-A-VIS THE LDCS. (THE NORDICS WILL ALSO DISCUSS THEIR IDEAS ABOUT THE DC WITH THE OTHER LIKE-MINDED IN HELSINKI). AASE DESCRIBED THE ORIGINAL NORDIC VIEW ON THE DC AS ONLY QUOTE REALISTIC UNQUOTE BUT NOW NORTH/SOUTH POLITICS SEEM TO BE OVERRIDING. WE GO BACK TO AASE'S CHOICE OF WORDS - THE NORDICS WILL NOT QUOTE EXPOSE THEMSELVES UNQUOTE BY PROPOSING DC ABOLISHMENT. LERNER

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